

Self-Employment

IN

4175.aa
3

SECRET;

CONTAINING

Evidences upon Self-Examination.
Thoughts upon Painful Afflictions.
Memorials for Practice.

under the Hand-Writing of that
Learned and Reverend Divine,

Mr. *Corbert* John Corbert,

Late of CHICHESTER.

with a Prefatory Epistle of Mr. John Howe.

EDINBURGH,

Printed by George Mosman, and are to be
sold at his Shop in the Parliament-Cloſs,
or at his Printing-House at the Foot of
Conf-Cloſs.



P

THE

Ch

way fun

at Part

ervatio

more

re, whic

(as it

Why it

re is no

iving

ged the

modest

vacies

doth

re diff

utiful,

it was

criptio

of

) fig

of a

THE PREFACE.

THE *Character* of this Holy Servant of
Christ, is already given by an eve-
ry way futable * *Hand*, in
that Part it lay open to the * *In his*
Observation of Others. *Sermon.*

more *Interiour Portrai-*

re, which is contained in these Papers,
(as it could only be) drawn by him-

Why it is now exposed to publick view,
there is no need to be scrupulously careful
in giving an Account. It must be acknow-
ledged there is usually with the Holiest Men,
a modest shyness of Communicating these
Privacies of their own Souls. Their *Inner*
man doth shew its own Face with the
more difficulty, by how much it is more
beautiful, and worthy to be beheld. And
it was with this excellent Person as his
descriptions upon these Papers shew, (*The*
of my own Soul) and (*Notes for my*
) signifying their intended Use, was
that of a Mirrour to represent himself to his

own Eye, not to other Mens.

Yet this Aversion (though great) has not been always Invincible, or such as Reasons to the contrary could overſwear. What are the Pſalms of *David*, and ſundry Memoirs of Holy Men in Scripture, that were remoteſt from Oſtentation and vainglory, but records of the moſt ſecret Diſpoſitions and Motions of the *hidden Man in the Heart*, made publick for the Inſtruction of their own, and ſucceeding Ages. As ſo the other publiſhed Meditations, and Soliloquies of ſome of the greateſt Worthies in the Chriſtian Church, muſt be underſtood to have had the ſame Pious Deſign. Nor, hath a generous Benignity, in ſome Heathens, permitted them to Ingroſs themſelves, or envy to the World the pleaſant Senſations of their own Miſery, which *they thought* might be ſome way ſtructive and Uſeful to other Men. As that * *Marcus Anton* Renowned Phyloſopher and Emperour is inſtance, that ſcrupled not to Write and leave behind him for this poſe, Twelve Books concerning his Life.

The thing cannot be Culpable if the ſign be Innocent, which will in great

The Preface.

5

discernable in the manner of doing it, when it is with unaffected simplicity, and without studied Disguise: As we commend a Picture, not so much for its being Specious, as that it is like the Face. So have good Men in giving Accounts of themselves not cared to put in the Distempers, and Disaffections of their Spirits, that are as great blemishes and Deformities, as a Wrat or Pimple on the Face; which the faithful Pen must as curiously Express, as the great Decencies.

However, if this Publication be Praiseworthy, nothing is to be Arrogated to the Author, as, if it be thought Blameable, nothing is to be Derogated. For though the Work it self (which carries it sufficient Praise with it) be owing entirely to (or rather to the Grace of God in him) making it publick, is from the Advice, Desire of some Friends, willing to improve what was once most private, for a publick Good.

This is but the Dissection of his Soul; less regretted by Friends, when he is now out of sight, and much more Useful, than that of his lately Pained Body.

And as an Anatomy discovers all the contexture of our Bodily Fabrick

A 3.

Her:

Here are arrived Representations of Faith, Love, an Heavenly Mind of Humility, Meekness, Self-denyal, Entire resignedness to the will of God, in their First and Continual Motions: With whatever Parts and Principles besides, Compose the whole Frame of the *New Creature*, as if we could perceive with our Eyes, how the Blood in a Humane Body, Circulats through all the Veins and Arteries, how the Heart Beats, the Spirits fly to and fro, and how each Nerve, Tendon, Fibre, and Muscle, perform their several Operations. Here it may be seen how an Heart toucht from above Works, and Tends thither-ward, how it depresses it self in Humiliation, Dilates it self in Love, Exalts it self in Praise, Submits it self under Chastenings, how it Draws in it's Refreshings, and Succours as there is need.

To many who have seen so Steady, Uniform, and Amiable a Course and Tenor of Life; How grateful is it to behold the secret Motions of those inward latent Principles, from whence all proceeded? Though *Some others*, would look no further than the Advantages in external Respects that accrue by it. As though *Some* content themselves to know by a Cloak, the Hour of the

The Preface.

7

Day, or partake the beneficial use of some
rarer Engine; *The more curious*, especially,
any that design *Imitation*, and to Compose
some like thing, would be much more Gra-
tified, if through some pellucid Inclosure,
they could behold all the inward Work,
and observe how every Wheel, Spring, or
Movement, perform their several Parts,
and Offices towards that Common Use.

What is here presented, as it may be of
great usefulness to all that seriously design the
Christian Life; so it hath a special Use for
such as design it not, and who think there
is no such thing.

It may peculiarly serve to Convince such
as are willing to think as Ill as they can of
the Calling, and Office of the *Ministry*, that
there are *Some* that serve the *Lord* in that
Work, who do not Study such Subjects as
are here Exemplified, only to frame Dis-
courses of them, wherewith to entertain
the People for an Hour; but for their own
Use and Practice too. That do *Live* the
things they *Teach*. And Eat of the Food
they prepare for others. That are in good
earnest, and most intent to *Save themselves*,
and them that hear them: And do really ven-
ture their own Souls upon the same Bot-
tom, upon which they would perswade
their

their Hearers to venture theirs, takeing a possible Care, *Lest when they Preach to others, they should themselves be Cast-away*

The very Opinion that we Preach, only for Forms sake, and to keep up the Custom and believe, or regard not what we ourselves say (as weel as the thing it self) is a small (nor perhaps uncommon) hindrance to the success of Preaching at this Day. It is hard to be serious in Hearing what I think, he is not serious in himself who Preaches it. If I Apprehend he Tattles, 'tis a great Temptation to me, to do too! You may see this Worthy Man considered the Gospel, as a *Gospel of Salvation* and not only *Taught*, but *Used* it accordingly. How Sollicitous was he to ground *Substantially*, and *Strongly*, his *Hope of eternal Life*! How warily did he feel his weight and Labour to Understand, and Know *Practically*, upon what Terms he might safely appear before his Judge!

To them who do not so, this ought to be taken for a *Reprehensive Example*, and may be very *Directive* to them that do.

That it may attain its proper Ends, the serious Prayer of

*One desirous to promote the Communion
Salvation,*

JOHN HOW

Mr. CORBERT's

ENQUIRY

INTO THE

State of his Soul.

His Introduction.

*IN order to peace of Conscience and assurance
of my good Estate towards God, it must in
reason be supposed, that I may rightly under-
stand the Marks of Sincerity set down in God's
Word, as also the predominant Inclination
and Motions of my own Soul; and that I may
be so far assured of my right understanding of
things aforesaid, as to have no reasonable
ground of doubting thereof. For I have no o-
ther ordinary way to know my sincerity in order
to the said Peace and Assurance, but to exa-
mine it according to my best Understanding by
the Marks thereof set down in Gods Word. In
this Self-Examination it is requisite that I use
Diligence and Impartiality with Constancy;
that I earnestly Pray for Gods Assistance*

in

in it, and Heartily offer myself to His Search as David did, Psal. 139. 23. Wherefore upon the most Impartial and diligent Search that I can make according to the best of my Understanding, together with earnest and constant Prayer to God to assist me therein as in my greatest Concern; it doth most rationally appear to me, that the predominant Inclination and Motions of my Soul are agreeable to the Mark of Sincerity set down in Gods Word, then my Conscience doing its Office aright is to judge for me accordingly, viz. that I am sincere. And in this Judgment I am to acquiesce, because it is the Judgment of Gods Agent and Minister, which he hath set up within me to judge under Him of my Internal State, according to His Law, by which He Himself doth and will judge me. God hath the same Aspect upon the Soul which Conscience His Vicegerent hath, as from time to time, or ordinarily judgeth not against him or without him, but under him and according to his Judgment, either acquitting or condemning. To this purpose the Apostle speaketh, 1 John 3. 20. 21. If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our Heart and knoweth all things; If our Heart condemn not, then have we Confidence towards God.

T

The State of my own

S O U L,

According to the strictest Search
that I can make.

Psal. 139. 23, 24.

*Search me O Lord and know my Heart, try
me and know my Thoughts, and see if there
be any wicked Way in me and lead me in the
Way Everlasting, Amen.*

The following Particulars were
set down in December, January,
February, An. 1663.

AS far as I am able to discern my Heart and
Ways, I have chosen the Lord for my por-
tion, I take up my rest in Him and not in the Crea-
ture. To love and fear and admire and bless
him, and to have Communion with him is my
chief joy. And the eternal Vision and Fruition
of God is my great hope. I would not only have
him hereafter, but here in this World for my
chief good. He is even now better than all the
World.

I come to God by Jesus Christ. And as I believe in God, I believe also in Christ, and rejoyce and glory in Him, and acknowledging my own sinfulness and unworthyness, I rest intirely on him as the ground of my Justification to Life, and all favour and acceptance with God.

I receive Christ as my Lord, and give up myself to Him. I let Him into my heart by Faith. I esteem Him precious and am willing to suffer the Loss of all that I may win Him; I desire to know Him in the Power of His Death and Resurrection, and am much grieved, that I do so weakly experience that power, and feel it no more operative in me in my dying to Sin and the World, and in living and walking in the Spirit.

I do not cease to lament the more heinous sins of my Life, and cannot forbear the continual imploring of the pardon of them. I do not return again to them, and I resolve never so to do; I watch and pray and strive against all sin, but especially against those Sins, to which I am more especially inclined; My Conflicts are daily, and are put hard to it. But I do not yeild up my self to any Sin, nor lie down in it, yea I do not suffer sinful Cogitations to lodge in me. Howbeit I am many times much discomposed, damped in Spirit, deadened in Duty, distracted in my Studies, and molested and hindered every way by the sin that dwelleth in me. But I resolve that sin shall have no rest in my Soul, and that I will never enjoy it. Though I cannot keep sin out of my heart, yet it doth not reign in my mortal Body, nor do I yeild my members to the service of it.

I would fulfil all Righteousness, and owe nothing to any man but love. I had a hundred-fold rather suffer wrong than do wrong.

It was said of Christ, that no guile was found in His Mouth, and of the faithful Company that followed the Lamb, that no guile was found in their Mouth. And that it may be so with me I endeavour with my whole heart.

I trust God with my chiefest outward Concernment, even with that, about which I am most Solicitous, and wherein to be satisfied is of great Moment to me, for that it hath as great an Influence upon my Spirit, as any outward thing hath.

And I do believe that God will provide for me therein, or otherways supply the want of it. My truest desire of God is, that my outward condition may be so stated by His Wise and Gracious Providence, as I may be least exposed to Temptation, and best disposed, and furthered unto Duty.

I have an Inclination to seek Self, particularly vain Applause, and that in Religious Services; wherein I have been highly guilty, but I shame myself for it before God, and I am willing to be satisfied in the Praise, that comes from Him alone;

I trust through His Grace, that I can deny myself in matter of Reputation to do His Will.

I love the Lord Jesus Christ and all His Saints.

The broken Estate of the Church, especially by these Evils, is a great trouble to my Spirit.

The Scandals of Professors I am truly grieved at,

I would not by their Weaknesses seek to ex-

amine my own Faults, or an advancing of my

Virtues.

I have no settled Bitterness and Revange against my Enemies, but I love, pity and pray for them. As concerning God's Enemies I am more provoked, but I would not be inhumane or cruel against them. For the wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of God.

I contemn none, I would not imbitter the Spirit of any. I would answer all Obligations of Courtesy, as accounting it a Righteousness. I would not insult over the weakness of any; And this is partly out of natural Tenderneſs and More Considerations, and I find that the Goodneſs and Kindneſs of GOD, the Meekneſs Gentleneſs of CHRIST hath hereunto made impreſſion upon me.

I find upon the Review of my Life paſt according to the cleareſt judgment, that I can make, that I have not gone backward, but proceeded forward in the ways of Godlineſs. And this increaſeſ reckeoned not by ſudden fits now and then hapening, but by the main progreſs of the Work in the total Sum.

I have been grieved that I am no more elevated in the hope of Heaven, and that I cannot attain to a longing deſire to be gone hence, and be there with Chriſt. I have laboured to raiſe my heart, and have had enlargement, even when Deadneſs and Flatneſs had been upon me. I think with my ſelf ſometimes, were my Evidenceſ clear for Heaven, I would exalt to be gone hence this very Hour; but I find not this readineſs at all times.

When I have had a good Enterprize in hand for God's Glory and ſome publick benefite, I watched againſt Vanity of Mind and vain Glory,

carryi

carrying it on: and I desire purely; to aim at God's
 Glory, and to be satisfied with my Reward in
 Him. And I take heed, that I forget not my
 Mortality, when I am pursuing that design; but I
 would fain bring up my self to this Frame, to be
 contented to be taken hence in the midst of it, as
 judging that I shall be no looser by my Removal,
 and God cannot stand in need of that Service.

Lord forgive my inordinate self-Love, which
 hath disturbed the Actings of pure Charity in di-
 vers passages of Moment. For self-love in my
 sensitive appetite hath had motions contrary to
 the Love of God and my Neighbour. Neverthe-
 less my Judgment hath disallowed it, and I have
 in the most part acted against it, and for that,
 which the Love of God and my Neighbour did
 command.

O Lord forgive my ten thousand Talents. I
 owe to Jesus Christ, who hath made Satisfac-
 tion, and lay this heavy reckoning to His Account.
 and forgive my Iniquity, for it is exceeding
 great.

These following Passages were set
 down, *March 4. An. 1675.*

Upon the Review of the foregoing Evidences,
 after twelve Years, I find though Grace
 still abiding in me, and more and more
 increased. And some particulars which did make
 me more to doubt of my good Estate, I find to
 have that time in a greater degree vanquished.

I have done what in me lies, to call to Remembrance all my Remarkable Sins, from my Childhood and Youth till now: And as far as I judge, I have Repented of them, both generally and particularly. And I now Repent of them from the bottom of my heart, with a self Abhorrence, If I can know my own heart by the strictest, and most impartial search that I can make

Upon the best Judgment that I can make of the Nature of Sin, and the Frame of my heart, and Course of Life; I know no sin laid upon me, which doth not consist with habitual Repentance, and with the hatred of Sin and an unfeigned consent that God be my Saviour and Sanctifier, and with the Loving of God above all.

The Mercy of God towards me, in the prolonging of the day of Grace, in the striveings of his Spirit, in his Chastisements, in the checks of Conscience, in the Recovery of my Soul out of various tempers and Backslideings, doth greatly affect my Heart, and strongly engage me to Him, who doth often call upon my Soul, and all that is within me, to Bless His Holy Name.

Though my Spiritual growth be very low and slow; yet to this present time, I have not grown Worse but Better, speaking of growth in the whole space, or greater spaces of my time and not every particular Day.

By Prayer, and Endeavours long continued, I have in some measure overcome a special Sinful Distemper of Mind, and gained the contrary Temper against a natural Propensity.

TH

Though my Faith in Christ be weak, yet to
part in his Promises, I am ready to part with
that is dear in this World, and I have no hope
of Happiness, but in Christ.

Though I have had doubtings touching the pro-
mised Salvation, yet I know as to my own Felicity,
I prize nothing more than that Salvation, being
glorifying, and enjoying God for Ever, and I
embrace it as my best Good. I Love Christ, whom
I have not seen, and I am affected towards Him,
towards a person, who taught and did the most
excellent Things, and promised a most excellent
estate to his Followers, and purchased their Re-
demption at the dearest Rate.

I am heartily grieved for loving God so little, yet
I am sure, This I Wrote according to a full per-
ception at that time. I Love nothing more than
God, and in my esteem and choice, I prefer the
eternal, Divine, and Heavenly Life, incompar-
ably before the Carnal Animal, Earthly Life. And
my esteem and choice, is made good by preform-
ance in Ordinary.

I Love to Love God. And I desire this Love
not only as an evidence of my Salvation, but for
myself. I had much rather have a heart to love
God perfectly than to have all the Riches, Honours
and Pleasures of this World.

My Conscience bears me witness that in the pre-
exercise of my ministry, I have no self-end of
worldly Advantage, or Reputation among Men,
any interest of the Carnal Mind: But if the
Command of Christ, and the necessities of Souls
do not oblige me to this Service, I should gladly

B

retire

My Temporal Estate is mean and Low, yet am Contented with it, and humbly blifs God for what I have. I leave in as narrow a compass for Expences, as I can, that I might have something to give to the Poor, and to be helpful to those that are in Need, according to my Ability. And as God hath required of us to Love Mercy; And our Saviour hath said, *It is a more Blessed thing to give than to receive*; So I have more pleasure in giving a Portion to the Needy, as far as my mean Estate will bear, than in laying out for the Delight of my own Sense, or Worldly Conveniences. And this proceeds not from a conceit of Merit in anything that I can do, but from a Love to please God, and to do Good.

Though I have a good Knowledge about the premisses, yet I am apt to waver about the Conclusion. And though I apprehend the Evidences of my Sincerity to be clear, yet a Timoroulness remains in me.

Though I have not as yet overcome the Fear of Death, yet I am sure that the unwillingness that is in me to Dye, is not that I might enjoy the pleasures of Sense, or any Gratification of animal Life.

I feel in my self a burden of Sin and Corruption, much Sensuality, Earthliness, Selfishness; nevertheless I judge, there is that Predominancy of Love to God, and Holiness, which I hope is unmoveably seated in my soul; whereupon I hope that it cannot be, that I should be cast out of His blessed Presence into that Perdition, which is a fl

of immutable hatred of Him. And I apprehend
that the most horrid, and helish state of Hell it
self, lyes in its Everlasting, and outmost Enmity
against God.

Thus I am searching and trying my heart and
ways, and what I find by my self I write down,
that I may have it by me for my Relief in an E-
vil day, and an hour of Temptation. For I must
expect the time, when by weakness or anguish of
Body or mind I may be disabled to recollect my
self, and duely to state the case of my own Soul.
And the Powers of Nature may so fail, that I may
have but a very weak Apprehension of what I have
to do in this great Concernment. I am warned
by the Parable of the ten Virgins to look to it, that
together with my Lamp I may have Oyl in my
kibb, and be ready to enter in with the Bride-
groom at his coming.

Lord be Merciful to me a Sinner, to me one of
the chiefest of Sinners. O my exceeding sinful-
ness! O the Riches of thy Goodness towards me!
Should not I loath my carnal self, should not I
grieve for grieving Thy Spirit? I desire to do so.
I hope to do so. Do what thou wilt with me, so
thou pardon, and sanctify and save me. I am a-
ware of thy Judgments, I can endure but little, O
how weak is my Heart! Nevertheless I will en-
deavour and I trust through Grace that I shall be
able to bear thy correcting hand. Thou art
true and Holy, Thou art Merciful and Gracious,
thou retainest not thine Anger for ever, because
thou delightest in Mercy. O spare me, and con-
sider me, and deal with me not after my Sins, and

reward me not after mine Iniquities; but as far as the East is from the West so far remove my transgressions from me; Comfort me and satisfy me for I wait for Relief from Thee. Whatsoever falls me, I will put my trust in Thee, I believe, Lord help my unbelief. Lord encrease my Faith. O my God I lie at thy feet and Mercy, I put my sinful distressed Soul into the Hands of *Jesus Christ* and I rest on the Covenant of *Grace* made in Him as all my Salvation, and all my Desire, *Amen.*

More Observations touching the State of my Soul. *March the 27th. 1676.*

O the wonderful Mercy of God towards me most vile and wretched sinner, in convicting, rebukeing and awakening me unto a self abhorrence, and an utter detestation of my sins, and special sins; so that I cannot be reconciled to them. Since the more powerful awakening of my Conscience I never have, and am perswaded never shall return to those former sins which made breach between God and my Soul. I hate every sin impartially. A sinful state is in my intestine an horrid and an helish state.

I find my self firmly resolved to give up any part of my Wordly Estate, that I shall be found to hold to anothers Wrong. If it be doubtful where the Right lies, I am resolved first to endeavour a Reference to Conscientious knowing Men; and

that cannot be fitly had, to submit it to a Legal Tryal, with a desire that Right may take place. I know not that I hold any such Estate, or that there is any doubt of my Legal Right to any thing that I possess. But I have made supposition for the Tryal of my own Spirit.

When I had a Father or Mother, I would have trusted them, to defend or deliver me from any Evil, from which it was in their Power to defend or deliver me. In the same manner I now trust to my loving Wife. Why then should I be suspicious of God, in whose hands I am? Why should I doubt of his dear Love, and tender Mercy towards me, or call in question his good Will to preserve, or deliver me from any Affliction, that would be too hard for me to bear, or to sustain, and comfort me under any Suffering, which he sees fit to inflict upon me? If when I was more careless, and forgetful of God, and when I ventured upon breaches with Him, He was pleased to convince, me of my Sin, and to rouse me up to a greater Care, and to make me more earnest for Pardon, and for Healing, and for all needful Grace, and more thoroughly resolved to follow Him throughout; surely he will not refuse me in my Adresses for more Grace, and a more confirmed State of Holiness. If I follow on to know the Lord, I shall know Him, and see His Salvation.

Though Death and Judgement be of dreadful Consideration; though God be Holy and Just, and I be vile, and guilty, and worthy of Eternal Perdition, yet why should I doubt of Mercy and Forgiveness, and of Support and Comfort in the
Darkness

Darkness of Death, and of Justification in the Day of Judgment, from a Merciful and Faithful God through a Powerful Redeemer and Advocate; seeing as a humble penitent Believer, I lye at his feet and cast my self into His Arms, and wait on His Grace, and am resolved to keep His wayes, and never to return to Folly.

I more desire to be Sincere, than to know that I am so. The Comfort and delight of being and doing Good, I set not so much by, as the very being and doing Good. To Love God, and to be Conformable to Him, is that, which I most of all desire should be in me.

I will trust God in His Wayes. I will strive against an over-timorous sollicitude about my own Salvation, and will commit my self to God, who is the Infinite Goodness and Love, and I will lye down, and take my Repose therein.

I am grieved, when I observe, or hear of the Scandals of some Professors, and the Disorders of those, that are in Charity to be judged Sincere and the Follies, and Frailties of the more Sincere and Upright. And it humbles me, by causing me to reflect upon my self; and my own Faults, and Weakness, and Proness to Offend; and it makes me more to desire the Heavenly Society, and to be among the Spirits of Just Men made perfect.

My Sins of Sensuality in every kind and degree I search out, and Repent of. I am kept by Grace from gross Sins of this Sort. In the Gratification of Sense, which are Lawful in general, I scrupulously dread Excess, and unduencels of Circumsta

How earnestly do I desire an absolute Furity,
All Envy, Unrighteousness, Uncharitableness,
Uncompassionatness, Undutifulness, and base Selfishness, which is the Root of all, I have Seen, Lamented, and Abhorred. The Motions and Stirrings of Mind, that way are suppressed and lodged: I will never give way thereunto.

Self Applauding, Self Seeking in matter of Praise and Honour before Men, I strive against. I desire to be as Sincere to anothers Reputation, as to my own. I would not value others, by their regard to me, but by their true Worth. I would be contented to be little in the eyes of others. This I unfeignedly desire and endeavour, and I hope that I have it in some good Degree.

All my Omissions, and Negligences in the Work of the Ministry, in Preaching, in Personal private Application I bewail, and heartily Resolve upon more Diligence and Faithfulness.

Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O Lord, but Remember me, and Spare me according by Thy great Mercy in Christ Jesus the great Propitiation for Sin, in Whom I desire to be found, and under the Covert of whose Wing I stand, that I may be Saved from Thy Wrath, And enjoy Thy Peace, and live in thy Presence, where is fullness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore.

February 22 1678.

GOD will never Damn in Hell any Soul, that hath the habitual, predominant Love of God

God though culpably Remiss, and otherways sinful, while he remaineth such; yea hell, and such Losses of God are inconsistent.

I love the Holy Will of God with all my heart and hate all Disconformity to it. Nothing is more grievous to me, than to displease God, and nothing is more Pleasant to me, than to please Him.

I strive after Christian Perfection.

I labour to be unbottomed of Self, to dye Self-advancements; to Self-gloriation, and to selfish joys, and to live wholly in, and to God, and to have self swallowed up in the Love of Him.

I labour in the Work of Self Resignation, that my Will may be confined to, and included in the Will of God.

I strive after Patience in its perfect Work, and do find a willingness to yeild to Gods Will in all Chastisements. I still Justify God, and do not entertain an hard Thought of His Dealing with me, but conclude that it is altogether Holy, Just and Good, and for the Best.

I feel my Sin a greater burden to me, than my Affliction. I had rather have Health of Soul, than a Body full of Pain, than Health and Ease of Body with a distempered Soul. And the Sense of my great Sinfulness disposeth me to Patience, under my Afflicting Infirmities of Body.

I narrowly watch my Heart, that it may not lodge, or admit a vain Thought. When I am surprized with Vanity, I suppress it as soon as I observe it.

I am very fearful of offending in a Word. When on the sudden, and by Incogitancy I have spok

Word, which upon second Thoughts is doubtful
me, though I had not such doubt in the speak-
of it, I have been much perplexed about it,
have engaged my self to a greater Watchful-

Aug. 1680.

Surely Christ hath my heart. Whensoever I
I swerve from Christ in a Thought, Word,
Deed, it is by inadvertancy and surprizal against
fixed Principle; and I have great Regrate at it,
Loath my self, for it.

If I were out of all fear of Damnation I had ra-
ther be Holy than Unholy; And I take pains
to use Gods Means to be Holy in Opposition to
the world, and I make it my chief care, and I do this,
because I make the Enjoying of God my chief
end, and rather than lose the hope thereof I
would willingly undergo the sufferings of this Life,
which lead to that blessed fruition, not excepting
any trial it self.

Aug. 1680.

Hope, when the end cometh, my God will
say to me, dear Child thy Warfare is accom-
plished, thine Iniquity is pardoned, enter thou in-
to thy Rest. Therefore I will both hope and qui-
etly wait for the Salvation of God. I will hope to
the end. Strengthen me O my God that I faint

October

October the 4. 1680.

I have no design, I pursue nothing contrary to God's Interest: But all my designs and suits are for God and Holiness. I think I am of this, if I be sure of any thing. My great and Care and Labour is to cleanse my self from filthyness of Flesh and Spirit, and to perfect Holiness in the fear of God.

To whom I yeild my self a Servant, to obey, Servant I am. But I do not yeild my self a Servant to sin to obey it; but I do yeild my self a Servant to God to obey Him. The design and business of my is to do His Will.

THE
WORKINGS
OF MY
HEART
IN MY
AFFLICTION.

Aug. the 5th. 1680.

THe will of God in laying this Affliction upon me. I unfeignedly approve as Holy, and Good; And I am unfeignedly willing to the Affliction, as it is an Evil laid upon me His Will, till the time come, in which He th

to remove it.. I watch and pray and strive
I may not give way to a repining thought a-
gainst His Holy Hand. In this point the spirit is
strong, but the flesh is weak. My Mind doth
consent to Gods dispensation and to my sub-
mission, and being most agreeable to His Wise
and Gracious Government, and most conducing
to my salvation. But my sensitive part, and
conscience also as it is in part unrenewed, weak
and sinful doth greatly reluctate. so that I am put
to it, and I must say, I am willing, Lord help
my unwillingness. I have not observed in the seven
days that a thought of direct or positive dis-
contentment, or vexatious commotion of Mind,
has been admitted by me, nevertheless I see to my
defect, that I fall exceeding short of that quietness,
tranquillity, and cheerfulness in my Condition,
and of that freeness of Self-Resignation to Gods
Will, that I desire, and His Goodness calls for.
I wrestle with God by importunate Prayer, that
the thorn in the flesh might depart from me; that
the distemper might be removed, or so mitigated,
that I might be in some comfortable ease and get
more cheerful freedom in doing my duty. Yet
I would not wrest this relief out of His Hands un-
reasonably, and without His good Will, and His
assisting. I would wait His time, and desire to
be filled with His Love and Favour, and with a sa-
tisfaction in His benefite. And so my earnest desire thereof
is limited with submission to His Holy Will. Yet
that this submission is no easy matter, but
that I must take pains with my own heart, and
that it is God, who must work my heart to it,
and

and keep under the flesh, which is always ready to rebel. It is hard to be willing to bear my wearisome condition. And O how weak is my heart; and ready to sink, if it be not upheld by a strength above my own! O let His Grace be sufficient for me, and let His Power be made perfect in my weakness! I feel my self bettered in the inner man by this Chastening. It hath furthered Mortification and Self Denial, and done much to the breaking of the Heart of Pride, and to bring me on towards that more perfect Self Examination, for which I labour. It hath much deadned the World to me, and my desire to the World. It makes me know in earnest the Emptiness of all Creatures, and how great my concern is in God. It drives me close to Him, and makes me to fetch all my Comfort from Him. I see of how little value all outward contentments are; and not only in my present afflicted state, but if I were at ease and in full prosperity. The sense of this benefit to my Soul is the great means of bringing my Will to that weak degree of Submission to God's Will, to which I have attained.

O that I could live more by Faith in this trying affliction. I endeavour to impress upon my Soul those arguments, which the Scripture affords for Patience and Long-suffering with joyfulness. But this will not do the Work unless the Spirit of Faith and Patience be given from Him, from whom comes down every good and perfect gift. I pray, I cry, to my Father, that He would give me the Holy Spirit according to His Gracious promise, that I might shew forth the Power of His

dy to rare, and that I might not dishonour Him, nor
discourage His Children, nor reproach Religion
by my Weakness. And in my bearing of it well,
my Reputation is nothing regarded by me, in com-
parison of the Honour of Christ. Him I desire to
Gloryly both in my obedience and patience.
I do not love God the less because of His cor-
recting hand upon me. As my necessities drive
me, so His Love draws me, and my Love brings
me to Him. I look to Him as my Father. And
shall I not honour my Father, and give Him re-
verence, when I am chastened of Him? The
Lord is my Portion sayeth my Soul, therefore will I
hope in Him. I will wait for the Lord, who
hideth His Face, I will look after Him; He re-
taineth not His Anger for ever, because He de-
lighteth in Mercy. Therefore He will turn again,
and have compassion upon. If He kill me I will
not forget my trust in Him: For He will not cast me
off for ever, if I cleave to Him with Faith unfeign-
ed, but even through Death it self will He save
me. He will bring me forth to the Light, and I
shall behold His Righteousness. When I say, what
shall I do in this case of such or such troublesome
or dangerous consequents, my heart answers, be not
careful, God will provide, I will leave it to Him.
Besides a natural desire of ease and rest, the sense
of the temptation which I am lyable in this condi-
tion makes me importunate to be delivered from it.
I feelingly know the weakness of my own heart.
And I am not ignorant of the Devil's Malice and
subtility, and how he will make the fiercest as-
saults, where I am weakest. Whereupon I tremble

in

grac

in my self for fear of being tempted, and shake
and greatly amazed. And upon this ground re-
specting my Soules safety, I judge an humble and
patient importunity with God for the removing
moderating of my distemper, to be my Duty.
Yet to keep me from being over solicitous and an-
xious in this thing, I consider that God doth go-
vern and limit all our Temptations, and will not
suffer us to be tempted above what we are able
but will with the temptation open a way for us to
elcape. Nevertheless I find, that I do much offend
by too great a vehemency of desire to be delivered
from this grievous burden without due submissi-
on; Also by too much disquietness and dejection,
when after some Expectation of a benefite by
that means, I perceive that my hope thereof is like
to be frustrated. The Lord help me to carry
better, and as I ought to do, and keep my mind
in its right frame.

My business under this Affliction is to be care-
ful about my own part, and to leave God's part to
His Care. My part is to do my duty, and to get
the Benefite of the Affliction. but to remove it is
God's part. Let me perform what belongs to me
and what belongs to God, He will certainly per-
form in His own time and Way. The sum of
my duty is Graciously to comply with the disper-
sation and to behave my self suitably to it, and to
please and honour God under it. Accordingly in
this I labour, and in this way I seek for Comfort.
And first I justify God and judge my self. God
exercises His own holiness and justice in this
Castigation. His justice and holyness I approve

and accept the punishment of mine iniquity
and Exercise an hatred o the Sin, for which,
now smart. I will bear the indignation of the
Lord, because I have sinned against Him, and I
repent with a self-aborrence; And I ly in the
dust ot His feet, and wait on Him, until that He
have Mercy upon me, and I am glad to receive
Mercy upon His Terms.

I have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope
that is set before me. I do most heartily take God
for my portion, and I had rather Live the divine
Life in Conformity to Him and Fellowship with
Him, here in the first fruits of the Spirit, and here-
after in the fulness of Glory, than live in the ful-
sels of the delights and contentments, that belong
to the natural Life upon earth in a way of Sin,
and alienation from the Life of God. I no most hear-
ily take Christ according to the offer of the
Gospel, not only to be justified from my sins and
delivered from the wrath to come by His Merits;
but also to be sanctified by His Word and Spirit,
and to be governed by His Laws, and to be
brought by Him unto the aforesaid Fellowship with
God. And my Life and practice in the main bent
and ordinary Course thereof is according to this
manner, in a dayly walking not by sight and sense,
but by Faith; not after the flesh but after the Spi-
rit, in setting my heart not on earthly, but hea-
venly things. I cast off vain desires and hopes,
and my expectations of good are from God ac-
cording to the tenor of His promises. When I
walk in darkness, and see no light of outward com-
forts, humane helps, and visible means, I will
trust

trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay my self upon My God. I strive with my own spirit to subdue it to the will of God; And in whatsoever I am tempted to be most impatient, therein I labour most for patience. My great care is that I may not sin against My God in any kind, and more especially that I may not sin by a rebellious impatience. Under his correcting hand. In this present distress I look upon my self, as being upon my tryal, and therefore I look more diligently to my behaviour in it. Now a prize is put into my hand for the proof of my Sincerity, and I labour accordingly to make good proof of it. I am willing to serve God in pain and patience, else I were unworthy of so good a Master. I am willing to be conformable to Christ in suffering, else I were unworthy of Him, but here I must say again, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak; Lord help my unwillingness I am called to deny all the pleasures of Sense and to mind them no more; And I am heartily willing of it. I am called to declare to others by the Exercise of Faith and patience the Righteousness of the Lord, and His Tender Mercies, and great Faithfulness, and that He alone is Allsufficient. O that the power of His Grace may be thus magnified in me! This is the fruit of the Afflictions, that I look after, and in this will I labour more and more. And through the help of Divine Grace I will not doubt of a good issue, while I am found in the Way of Duty. To them, who by patient Continuance Well-doing seek for Glory and Honour and Immortality, God, who cannot lye, hath promised to give Eternal Life.

I am desirous to be delivered from this Affliction (if it be the will of the Lord) upon this account, that I might have a more notable proof of my freer choosing of God for my portion, when I am not thus driven to Him, as now, because I can go no where else for Comfort; also of my freer turning from the World, even then when I am capable of enjoying it. To have such a proof of these things in my self, I should take for a great advantage, and be greatly thankful. Nevertheless, for the quieting of my Mind, I consider that my present afflicted State doth better secure me from Temptations which might draw my heart from God to the love of the World; in which respect, Prosperity is far more Dangerous than Adversity. Moreover, my present State gives me advantage for a higher proof of the Grace that is in me, and of the power of Divine Aid, upholding me in a Life of Faith and Patience, by which I live upon God alone, when Wordly Comforts fail me, and by which I am enabled to overcome things grievous to Nature, and to get above, not only the Pleasures, but the sharp Pains of Sense, and to Live, and endure with little natural, or bodily Rest. Also, it gives me the advantage of exercising a resolved, willing Self-Resignation to God in this Dispensation, which is harsh to flesh and blood, and resting in hope, when there is no present appearance of help, and a waiting, and looking for the Lord, who hides His Face, and cleaving to Him by constant Love, though he doth sore Bruise me. If I continue in the Exercise of these Graces, they will give me a good Proof, that the Heavenly Na-

ture is in me, and will make way for great Assurance towards God, and full Consolation in Christ Jesus. And yet further, I trust that I have long before this distressed, chosen God for my Portion, and drawn off my heart from the flattering Vanities of this World. And I know, that in this Distress, I do not come to Him constrainedly, or merely as driven. For I delight to draw nigh to Him, to pour out my Heart before Him in Prayer and Meditation. My Meditation of Him is sweet to my Soul, and I do not love to be diverted from it. And when my Distemper is any whit more easy, it works unto a Rejoycing in Him. And it is for enlargement of heart towards Him, that I chiefly desire bodily Ease and Rest.

Hear my Cry O God, attend unto my Prayer. I will Cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I.

God the Infinite Goodness and Love, will not cast off a poor Soul that lies at His Feet, and cries for the Help of His Grace, when it is ready to sink under the Burden, and is willing to have Mercy upon His Terms.

Therefore, I will still cry to Him, and look for Him, and lean upon Him, and will not depart from Him by an evil heart of Unbelief. This I resolve in His Strength. Lord Strengthen me unto the perfect Work of Patience.

Lord I heartily consent that Thou shouldest use me as Thou plearest, so thou use me, as one of those that Love Thy Name. Disposal is an effect of Propriety, but it is always a regular, and a loving

Dispo
Dea
nowest
The
Th
ke not
ord, w
must Be
ithout
e Life
For ev
eaven.
Pitty m
en.
Comfo
omfort
The L
s unto
ar; Bl
Can I
gmen
stand

The Workings of my Heart

35

Disposal of the Subjects of his Government.

Deal favourably with Thy Servant. Thou

knowest my Frame, Remember that I am but dust.

The Lord will perfect, that which concerneth

Thy Mercy O Lord endureth for Ever. For-

ake not the Works of thine own Hands. O

Lord, without The I can do nothing. Therefore

must Beg, and Thou wilt give Grace sufficient

without which I cannot Subsist. For therein is

the Life of my Spirit.

For ever, O Lord, Thy Word is settled in

Heaven.

Pitty me O Lord as a Father Pittyeth his Chil-

ren.

Comfort me O Lord, as a one whom his Mother

comforteth.

The Lord will wait, that He may be Graci-

ous unto you: For the Lord is a God of Judg-

ment; Blessed are all they, that wait for Him.

Can I be in a better Hand? As my professed

Judgment is concerning Gods Proceeding, so let

me stand affected towards it.

C 2

NOTES

NOTES

FOR

My Self.

KEEP thy heart with all Diligence; for out of it
do arise the Issues of Life.

Death and Life are in the Power of the Tongue.
Entertain not a sensual Imagination for a Moment; and give not way to the least Glance of the Eye towards Vanity.

Be always expecting some Trouble or other to interrupt thy outward Pace and Rest.

Never expect any thing from the World; and when it offers thee any thing that is good for thee receive it; but catch not at it greedily.

Be alwayes mindful what thou may'st do for thine own and others Salvation, in every instant upon every Occasion.

Dye daily.

In arguing with another, watch against very inordinate Heat of Passion, loud speaking and every rash word.

If any neglect or slight thee, care not for it yet observe it.

Any matter of Tryal to thee, reckon among thy gains.

Take no delight of Sense, but in a manner and direct Subserviency to Spiritual Ends; and use not that delight to irritate, but to allay Sensuality.

When a sensual Imagination or Passion breaks in, then excite a Taste of the Powers of the World to come; and delay not to recover the Divine Frame.

What thou doubtest, do not.

In thy Actions, consider not only what is lawful, but what is best in the present Circumstances; and do that.

In every delight of Sense, watch against all brutishness.

When thou art in company, where the Talk is out-vain, watch to put in a Word, that may be to Edification.

If any despise thee, do not bear a grudge against him for it. And be not offended with any, merely because they do not honour thee.

When thou art framing Excuses, take heed of speaking an Untruth, or approaching near to it; lest in avoiding the Offence of Man, thou make too bold with God. Take heed of this also, when thou wouldest speak pleasingly, and avoid Offence in speaking.

Use no Recreation or Delight of Sense, but that thou canst at that very time desire of God, that it may be sanctified to Spiritual Ends.

When thou hearest that another hath spoken any thing to thy Injury or Disparagement, beware of a transport of Anger, that thou speak not harshly and unadvisedly against him, or too passionately for

Uphold the Reputation of thy Colleague, or that
that is joined with thee in Service, as thou wouldest
thine own.

Watch against all secret Pleasure, in the lessening
of another for advancing thy self.

Pray heartily for the success of thy Colleague and
others; Who perform the same service that thou
art ingaged in. And rejoyce in whatsoever good
is done by them, as in what is done by thy self
and own it before Men.

Use not Animosity and Contention in any Matter,
that may be brought to a good Issue in the
way of Peace.

Engage not hastily as a Party in a Difference
between others; but reserve thy self impartial
and uningaged, that thou mayest moderate between
them.

Whil'st thou lamentest thy weakness in some Case
and seekest more Strength, be sure to use the
greater Strength in all other Cases, whereunto
thou hast attained; and be not remiss or forgetful
in any duty, that is more facill to thee: So that
thou have Comfort in thy willing Mind, and best
Care, and do much towards the Attainment
of that, which thou yet wantest; and reachest
it.

In the time of prayer, let no Business divert thee
from it, that is not of present Necessity.

When thou hast an opportunity of speaking
Word for the Good of anothers Soul, defer not
doing of it till another time.

Watch against all bitter, and over-passionate speech

es against malignant Opposers of the Truth. For Meekness of Spirit and Behaviour, is more according to Christ, than wrathful Zeal.

Be not transported with passion against those Conformists, who are more sober than many others; yet manifest too little Compassion to their suffering Brethren. For even in the Regenerate, there is a Remainder of the Spirit of Envy, Partiality, and Selfishness, and too much of Wrath, and Bitterness, and other parts of the Serpentine Nature, though in a mortified Degree. And we are to yeild grains of Allowance, for the Temptations of Prejudice, Interest, &c. To which good Men, as well as others, are obnoxious.

In thy Zeal against the Sins of others, be mindful of thine own exceeding Sinfulness: Call to remembrance thy great Offences which though they are unfeignedly repented of, give thee to understand what cause thou hast to be meek, and humble, and patient towards all Men.

Watch against the Motions of Pride and Hypocrisy, in the presence of any Person, whose Favour and Opinion thou much esteamest. What is Man that thou shouldest pass to be judged by Man's Judgment, or seek Applause from Man!

Be not discomposed about some petty Absurdities of Behaviour, or little Indecorums, or Oversight: For so to be, is Pusillanimity.

When thou hast conceived a dislike of any Person, his Ways, or Actions, or dost ill resent his Carriage towards thee; take heed, thou do take any secret Pleasure in the fore-sight of Evil, coming upon him; or in hearing or observing any such Folly.

Folly of his, as tends to his Reproach or Ruin, or notable Dammage.

If thou hast fore-spoken the Calamity, or any Evil, that in Reason is like to befall one, who doth unadvisedly manage himself, and his Affairs, take heed of wishing or willing, that the Evil should come to pass, lest thy Judgment or Fore-sight should seem to be disparaged; yea, take heed of any Motion rising towards such a Wish or Will.

My own exceeding Faultiness engages me in seeing and hearing the Faults and Follies of others, to pitty them, rather than to rejoyce or glory over them; and to cover or lessen those Faults, rather than to aggravate, or display them.

The Mercy and Forgiveness, that I have found and hope for at the Lords Hand, engages and disposes me to forgive Injuries and Abuses done to me. And I should not think it much, that I, who am so sinful, should bear some Contumelies or Abuses from Men.

It is displeasing to me, to hear the Faults of others insisted on, whither they be Matters of Folly and Inconsiderateness, or of Perverseness and Malice; but especially if the Matter be not evident I find, that petty Dammages and Injuries are apt to be vexatious, especially in a matter the whole whereof is but little; as in a little Farm or Living. Wherefore, I endeavour, that I be not surprized with a troublesome Appearance, and consider the Moment of a thing, how light it is.

Abhor every Thought, Word, and Deed which is contrary to Love, and tends to the hurt of others.

The
ully ma
After
teaching
ow-Me
ed for th
effectual
If God
have m
the statu
ome In
good of
ther God
with any
father, a
at Am
to Lose
the End
In thi
here be
all those
For a
were for
provide
propensi
Wordly
at our
which b
To a
ot any
provide
In all
then th

The more men wrong thee, the more watch-
fully maintain thy Love towards them. IV

After thy publick Ministrations in Prayer and
preaching, be not thoughtful or much concerned,
how Men like thy performance; but be concern-
ed for this, how acceptable it is to God, and how
effectual and successful to holy and saving Means.

If God single me out for special great Suffering,
I have no reason to judge amiss of it: For such is
the state of things in the World to come, that
some Individuals must of necessity suffer for the
good of the People. And, why not I, as well as ano-
ther God is my Owner, and He may do with me, as
with any other, even as He pleaseth; and He is my
Father, and he will use me well, and make me suffici-
ent Amends for all my Suffering; and I shall be
no Loser, but an exceeding Gainer thereby in
the End.

In this present state of Tryal, it is requisite that
there be a sufficient Difficulty and Hardship, for
all those that shall be saved, to grapple with.

For all our Boasts of Free-will, unless there
were some heavy Weights of sufferings cast by
Providence into the Ballance, to poise against our
propensions to follow Lusts, and Pleasures, and
Wordly Allurements, we should never seriously
set our selves to the secure and self-denying Duties
which belong to true Godliness.

To avoid Inconveniencies to thy self, expose
not any to danger, whose safety thou art bound to
provide for.

In all Accusations, whether publick or private,
when thou hast made a sufficient Defence, enter

not into needless Matters for Ostentation, or such
further Vindication, as is not necessary, if thou
stand in a slippery place; but lye at a close Guard,
lest thou be entangled, or in some point circum-
vented.

I will never wittingly and willingly do amiss,
by Commission or Omission, in a greater or lesser
Matter, because I shall too often do amiss, at least
in smaller Matters, through Ignorance, or Inad-
vertency, or Surprizal of Passion, do what I can.

Watch every Opportunity to put in a savoury
Word, for the good of a Soul, with whom thou
hast occasion of Converse.

Remember thou hast nothing of thine own, but
all is the Lords, and accordingly use all that
thou hast to no Carnal Interest, but to serve Him,
as being wholly devoted to Him.

Be as serious and hearty in thy Prayers to
God for the Concerns of others, as for thine own.

Watch against Selfishness, lest it work unto
great Uncharitableness.

When thou hast Evidences of thy Sincerity
which cannot in reason be gain-said, hold to
them, and take Comfort in them; yet still endea-
vour by Reviews, and further Searchings, to clear
it more and more.

We keep our Evidences, by keeping our Grace
in their lively Exercise.

Fetch thy Comforts from Heaven, and not from
Pleasures or Hopes here below.

Do not overvalue any Worth that is in thy self,
but think it rather less than more, than it is in
deed.

If any slight thee, be neither dejected nor provoked.

Do not value Men according to their Esteem of thee, but according to their true Worth.

Watch against the expectation of hearing thine own Praise; and when such a thought arises, instantly suppress it.

When thou art commended, let not thy thoughts dwell on it with delight; but let it be to thee as nothing.

Take heed of too great a Valuation of thine own Work, or Usefulness in thy Place; and lay not too great a stress thereon.

When Friends out of Love overvalue thee, it concerns thee not to over-value thy self; nor to take more than thy due, though they give it.

Have a habit of Compassion towards the Afflicted, firmly fixed in thee, that the Motions thereof may be suitably stirred up on every Occasion.

Let an Abhorrence of any Content in anothers Sufferings, be deeply imprinted on thee; that every thought thereof may be prevented, or instantly suppressed: Yea, hate all Disregard to anothers Misery.

Watch against all Eagerness, and immoderate delight in Eating and Drinking; and against minding any kind of Food, for the pleasing of the Sense. Come to thy Meals not like a Brute, but as becomes a Saint. Never terminate in the sensitive Pleasure, but make use of it to raise thy Heart to God.

When thou hast eaten so much, so that thou thinkest more is not expedient, or is better forbear than

than taken, proceed not to a Bit more, lest thou be entangled or disturbed.

Still consider, is this Act, I go about, agreeable to one that hath Communion with God? will this act promote communion with God? Do I come to this Act, so as to have Communion with God thereby promoted.

Seek the lawful contentment of any that are about thee, as thou dost thy own; and be as glad to gratify them as thy self, so far as it is convenient for them. Hate and shun all motions of unworthy Selfishness: And see, that others be sharers with thee in thy pleasant Things, and be not content to have them to thy self alone.

Be not over solicitous, for humouring thy self in sensitive Suavities, but rather suspicious of it, and be abstemious from it.

Always mind and do the present Duty. Comply with the present Dispensation, and make the most of it. Thy business is to please God, and God will provide for thy Comfort.

Lay thy heart to rest in the Will of God. For there is no other Rest for the Soul, to be thought on.

I will not Indent with God for any good, but what is included in the Covenant of Grace. I will expect no good but according to the Tenor of that Covenant, which is all my Salvation, and all my Desire.

I am resolved that Pride shall not set me to Study or Preach, or Pray, or carry me on in any Service vice. If thoughts of Men-pleasing or Mans Applause, steal in with my honest intentions, I will

instantly

the rega

stantly cast them out, as soon as they be discovered, and I will watch and pray for the preventing of them. I will watch, when I go forth in my service for God, that Pride do not send me forth. Mens Opinion of me shall be nothing with me, but the pleasing of God and the doing of good shall be my whole scope.

In performing Prayer I am intent upon God, and his Hearing and Observing my Thoughts and Words; and I earnestly purpose and strive against Thoughts about Mens observing and judging of my performance. Nevertheless, I do find that together with my sincere and earnest Attention directed to God, Thoughts of Regard to Mens Esteem, and Judging, will too often thrust in, do what I can, so as either to be pleased or troubled, as I think they judge. These thoughts have greatly troubled my Spirit. Hereupon I consider, that due regard to expressions for mens sake, that they be affecting and not offensive, is not faulty but necessary; and therefore must be heeded. And I think that my thoughts above Mens judging have this Intention at least chiefly that my expressions be affecting, and not offensive, yet I am jealous of the mixture of Corruption and Vanity. I earnestly endeavour to have my heart so filled with the Apprehension of God's Infinite Majesty, and my Infinite Concernment in Him, that all impertinent Thoughts may be quite swallowed up. All designing and endeavouring to please Men for my own praise I do at that very time detest and abandon, yea at that very time I am sure that I do very little regard either the Approbation and Praise, or the

the disallowance and dispraise of those very persons, about whom my Thoughts are apt to run out, as aforesaid. I do my uttermost to prevent, restrain and suppress all such thoughts, they are a burden to to me. There is scarce any thing that stirs within me, which hath less of my Will, than these thoughts have. There is scarce any thing against which I do more watch and pray and strive, than against these thoughts. And whatsoever tincture of Vanity and Corruption be found in them, I am heartily lorry for it, I hate and loath it, and I hope that the Merciful God will not impute it to me, to the rejecting of my prayer or to any breach between Him and mee.

I find that my very fear of this evil, and desire to avoid it, doth draw my thoughts to it, as a Mans great desire to sleep, and his fear that he shall not sleep doth commonly keep him weaking.

These thoughts I abhor, not only before and after, but in the very time they come in. And I strive with might and main against them. If God approve my Service and own me in it, I shall be abundantly satisfied, though men (whatsoever or how many soever they be) should despise and loath it. On the contrary, if men should never so highly approve it, I can never be satisfied, if God do not accept and bless it. This I am sure of, if I be sure of any thing.

I discern that by care I have brought it to that pass, that my thoughts of others present with me in prayer are not with regard to their prayers which I value not, but to what is fit to be done by me in that service, and to their being affected with it.

I find I
et I sh
weaknesse
ing. th

I find I am prone to be anxiously scrupulous:
let I should consider that there be insuitable
weaknesses (as impertinent thoughts) accompa-
nying the best Performances.

FINIS

4 PE 62

21 M 13

